

# Rhodora

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## NOTES ON THE CORAL-BERRY (SYMPHORICARPOS ORBICULATUS)

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THE purpose of this article is to record some observations on the above plant as it has come under my notice in Gary, Lake Co., Indiana, and a solitary plant in a yard at Hobart, Indiana, about five miles away. The plant is cultivated sparingly in this region, and some have run wild, the seeds being disseminated by birds. Deam's "Flora of Indiana" says probably native only in the southern part of the state.

CLEISTOGAMY: I have never seen this feature mentioned in either botanical or horticultural literature. My attention was first directed to it by a neighbor, Mr. W. C. Nichols, who brought the species from western Missouri, and very kindly gave me a plant. Mr. Nichols has stated that he never saw the plant with showy flowers. I have not seen a cultivated plant bearing any but cleistogamous flowers. All the cultivated shrubs are rather small, the height of a typical stem from the specimen in my yard being 1.1 m., with two growth-rings, and all others in cultivation that I have seen are about the same size. On such shrubs cleistogamous flowers appear about July 15. Fruit beginning to ripen was first noted on the shrub in Hobart, October 14, 1946. In Mr. Nichols' yard fruit was just ripening October 23, 1946, the earlier ripening of the Hobart fruit being probably due to this town being several miles from Lake Michigan.



On the other hand, plants which have run wild, and grow decidedly larger, produce rather showy flowers in abundance, and no cleistogamous flowers ever appear. In an oak woods in the eastern part of Gary, the largest specimens being along the edges of marshes, are several plants with these showy flowers. Such flowers are produced early, the specimens I have before me being dated May 6, 1946. Both ripened fruit, and that, more or less green, was noted June 21, 1946. The majority of the flowers are produced on older shoots, although shoots of the current year may have flowers at or near the base. Cleistogamous flowers, however, seem always to appear on shoots of the current year.

OTHER NOTES: The plant grows from 2-5 feet high, according to Britton & Brown "Illustrated Flora", a maximum of 7 feet according to "Hortus Second". This seems to be true in all the plants I have observed except one, the exception being a giant specimen 3.93 m. tall, more than 5 feet taller than the maximum of other observers. A typical stem from this plant showed 6 growth-rings.

In regard to the berries, the 7th Edition of "Gray's Manual" says "berries small". This is true of many of the fruits of the Hobart specimen, where the branches were heavily loaded; however, variations in size were noted, and the berries on the other plants could hardly be said to be small. Bailey's "Manual of Cultivated Plants" says that berries ripen in late autumn, and berries from cleistogamous flowers do ripen in the fall, but plants with showy flowers begin to ripen fruit even before summer has commenced, and by autumn all fruit has disappeared.

Specimens illustrative of this article have been sent to the Gray Herbarium.

Gary, Indiana.

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A VARIETY OF A WESTERN POLEMONIUM IN MINNESOTA.— Since *Polemonium reptans* L., occurring in southeastern Minnesota, has been regarded as the sole representative of the genus in the state, the discovery of a new variety of a western species in the north-central region of the state was not altogether without interest.

The plant first came to the attention of the writer in the winter of 1944 during a showing of a film on Minnesota wild flowers by